

Australian Native Plants Society – Canberra Region

Guidelines for Wednesday Walks

The Guidelines are to help you to prepare for a walk and to understand your responsibilities – to yourself and to the group.

Preparation

The decision to go on a walk is yours and you do so at your own risk. You must be aware of your own limitations and not attempt anything which could endanger you or anyone else. At the start of the walk, if the leader on the day believes that the walk will be too hard for your level of fitness, they may ask you not to proceed and you should accept this.

You need to be properly prepared for your walk. Specifically:

- wear appropriate clothing/footwear for the terrain and vegetation, and for the weather (which may vary through the day);
- protect yourself from ticks and leeches when in susceptible areas;
- always be snake aware;
- carry enough food and water for the walk, being mindful of the expected temperatures.

The Walk

A basic principle of a group bush walk is for everyone to look out for everyone else. This is best achieved if everyone stays close together. However inevitably the group may spread out, and you should follow these principles.

- know where the group is at all times; keep others in sight and do not divert out of sight of the group unless you tell the group of your intentions.
- if you need to relieve yourself behind a tree, tell someone first so that they can check that you re-join the group.
- if you become isolated from the group, stay put and shout or use a whistle (or your mobile phone if coverage is available) to attract attention.
- if you notice someone having difficulty, make sure others in the group are aware, so that the group can deal with the situation appropriately.
- if you are having difficulty part-way through a walk, let others in the group know so that something can be done to help you. Importantly, do not put off letting others know – it is much easier to deal with a problem before it becomes serious.

The **essential rule** to follow when walking – and when travelling in convoy – is to keep those behind in sight at all times.

If you need to leave the walk early to return home:

- you should only do so if you are an experienced bush walker, and know your way back to the cars;
- tell others in the group (and in particular, whoever is maintaining the list of participants) that you are leaving;
- as a matter of courtesy, later in the day inform the person maintaining the Attendance Register that you have returned home safely.

It is possible that the leader on the day will ask you not to leave because they regard it as too dangerous.

At the end of the Walk

- The member of the group looking after the Attendance Register will check to make sure everyone on the Register has returned.

- If there has been an 'incident' on the walk, the details should be documented as soon as possible and ANPS Council informed.

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